Spur in STD traffic

1205. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recent cut in telecom tariffs has spurred the STD traffic;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Bharti's rate cut has also been made effective from 26th January, this year; and

(c) If so, the percent of increase in metered call units because of both the cuts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Although the traffic is BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) has increased by about 25 per cent after the reduction in STD rated, there has been a decrease by about 20 per cent in the long distance metered call units as per a sample study conducted in the month of February, 2002.

New internet connections in Assam

1206. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that VSNL has stopped giving new connections for internet in Assam;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by what time;

(c) whether Government are aware that apart from Guwahati, in other townsof Assam, VSNL is the only service provider, if so, howVSNL is trying to improve the situation;

(d) what are the towns in Assam presently having internet access; and